

As delivered

Admiral Thomas H. Collins  
USCGC MACKINAW Keel-Laying Ceremony  
Introductory Remarks  
9 February 2004

**Good morning! I'm very pleased to be here with you today for the keel laying of our next Great Lakes Ice Breaker, Coast Guard Cutter MACKINAW.**

**We are honored to have the Honorable Mark Green and Mrs. Jean Hastert here with us to share in this special day. Congressman Green, thank you for being a part of this special event in Coast Guard history. Mrs. Hastert, thank you for accepting our invitation to be the sponsor of the Coast Guard's newest and largest cutter to be placed in service on the Great Lakes.**

**[Recognize other VIPs].**

**A very warm welcome also to all of our friends here at Marinette Marine Corporation. I couldn't be more pleased that you are the ones building our newest icebreaker. Your pride in workmanship is evident in everything you do and so I'm looking forward to our continued great partnership with the construction of MACKINAW.**

**What you see before you is the start of Coast Guard cutter MACKINAW, WLBB-30. It will be a one-of-a-kind icebreaker in the Coast Guard's fleet upon completion – 240 feet long, with a beam of 58 feet, and a 16-foot draft.**

**We have a long and proud history of sailing a major icebreaker on the Great Lakes, stretching back to World War II. The war placed heavy demands on Great Lakes industry to produce war materials; to meet these demands, more cargo and raw materials needed to be shipped through the Lakes. To keep these materials on the move during the harsh winter months, a major icebreaker was needed. So, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued the order that put the original – and current – Coast Guard Cutter MACKINAW on the Great Lakes. She was commissioned on December 20, 1944, and has served our country faithfully on these waters ever since.**

**The Coast Guard's icebreaking mission here on the Great Lakes continues to be essential – President Roosevelt recognized that and it's been proven again and again – almost every winter! Icebreaking on the Great Lakes is critical to the region's marine transportation system, and thus to the region's**

**economy and prosperity. MACKINAW's icebreaking allows the domestic steel industry access to raw materials for year-round production. The millions of tons of iron ore and other cargos shipped during the "ice season" every year support more than 100,000 jobs in the steel industry, 8,600 iron ore miners in Minnesota and Michigan, more than 2,000 Great Lakes sailors, and thousands of support jobs in related industries.**

**This year marks the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the original MACKINAW's commissioning. This ship is one of our oldest – and it has one of the toughest jobs around. In order to ensure we can keep the Great Lakes ports open longer in the winter and get them open earlier in the spring – today and well into the future – we had to plan for MACKINAW's replacement.**

**The journey to the new MACKINAW began when the Coast Guard awarded Marinette Marine a contract in October 2001. Today's ceremony signifies the first construction milestone for the new MACKINAW, which will ultimately demonstrate its enhanced performance and improved capabilities when it joins the Coast Guard Fleet in 2005.**

**When completed, MACKINAW will be purely state-of-the-art. Its most unique feature will be its form of propulsion: it will use two fully azimuthing podded propulsors, meaning its “podded” – or protected -- propellers will rotate 360 degrees for greater maneuverability. It will be the first such vessel in the Coast Guard fleet and for that matter, the first for the U.S. government. These Azipods deliver a combined 9200 horse power. MACKINAW will also have a 500 horse power tunnel thruster forward.**

**MACKINAW will need all those “horses” too – this winter and the last have proven the need for icebreaking on the Great Lakes! MACKINAW will be able to break 32 inches of level ice at 3 knots ahead or 2 knots astern and 8-12 feet of brash ice – chunks of ice that have refrozen -- at 3 knots ahead or 2 knots astern.**

**MACKINAW’s engineers will not be the only ones with something to brag about. The crew topside will enjoy the most modern bridge equipment in the fleet. MACKINAW will have a fully integrated bridge system, integrating the control-and-navigation system, voyage-planning system, dynamic-positioning system, an electronic-chart-display-and-**

**information system, and radar. The vessel will be equipped with a robust communications suite. The bridge is designed to be operated by one person in unrestricted waters, although we will operate with two or more. MACKINAW will also have an astern conning station located aft on the deck house to better monitor operations astern.**

**The 50-person crew – 25 fewer than assigned to the current MACKINAW -- will literally be able to maintain the new MACKINAW's position within a 10-meter circle in up to 30-knot winds and up to 8-foot waves, with a margin of error near zero.**

**The bridge is configured with an area on the port side aft to accommodate mission command-and-control activities for such things as search and rescue and homeland security, while allowing for the safe navigation and ship-control functions forward. MACKINAW will also have port and starboard bridge control consoles.**

**All these modern design features of the new MACKINAW will make it a more effective and efficient resource for the Great Lakes.**

**In addition to icebreaking, one of MACKINAW's primary missions will be aids to navigation. The vessel will have 3200 square feet of buoy deck space, configured exactly the same and with the same equipment as our large buoy tenders. MACKINAW will be able to service buoys in water as shallow as 18 feet and its crane will be able to recover buoys, chain, and sinkers weighing up to 20 tons.**

**In a nutshell, we will be getting a much higher return on investment with the operation of the new MACKINAW. Congress recognized this potential when they appropriated over \$130 million in our fiscal year 2000 budget.**

**I've been telling you about the end product – what MACKINAW will be. Well, we will get to that end state because of the patriotic workers who are Marinette Marine. I consider the Coast Guard fortunate that a number of our ships have been built by Marinette Marine – most recently, our 16 new 225-foot large buoy tenders and our 14 new 175-foot medium buoy tenders. We have a proud history and a longstanding partnership with Marinette. The people who are Marinette Marine are among the most talented and dedicated**

**shipbuilders there are. I'm proud to have you on the Coast Guard team.**

**Now it is my honor to introduce Congressman Mark Green. Congressman Green was elected to the United States Congress in 1998. He represents the 8<sup>th</sup> District of Wisconsin, covering most of the northeastern part of the state, which includes part of MACKINAW's area of responsibility. He presently sits on the House Judiciary, International Relations, and Financial Services Committees, and is a member of the Coast Guard Caucus.**

**Representative Green started his career in public service when he was elected to the Wisconsin State Assembly in 1992, where he served for six years before his election to the U.S. House of Representatives.**

**Representative Green is very much a Wisconsin product. He met his wife, Sue, when they were both students at the University of Wisconsin Eau-Clair. After earning his bachelor's degree, he went on to earn his Juris Doctor from the University of Wisconsin Madison.**

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**Representative Green and Sue live in Green Bay with their three children, Rachel, Anna, and Alex.**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, Congressman Mark Green.**

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[Rep Green makes 3-5 min remarks. Then you return to the podium to introduce the ship's sponsor, Mrs. Jean Hastert.]

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**Now, it is my honor to formally recognize MACKINAW's sponsor. Mrs. Jean Hastert is a Shipman, Illinois native, graduating from the Southern Illinois University with a bachelor's degree in physical education. She later earned her master's degree in physical education from the University of Colorado in Denver. Mrs. Hastert used her education for the benefit of America's future generations – she was a teacher. She has taught at every undergraduate level: high school, junior high, and grade school and her career as a teacher spanned five decades. It was as a teacher at Yorkville, Illinois High School that she met and married a fellow teacher, Dennis Hastert. He later left teaching and went on to serve six years in the Illinois State Congress. In 1986, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and 5 years ago, he was elected**

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**Speaker of the House. The Hasterts have two sons, Joshua and Ethan.**

**As the ship's sponsor, Mrs. Hastert will be joining us again in 2005 for MACKINAW's christening and launching. The job of a sponsor is a mighty one. A christening ceremony is referred to as the "endowment of individuality." Sponsors, commonly referred to as the "ship's godmother" do not simply break the bottle of champagne on the ship's bow; rather their job also entails "giving of their own personality to the ship and that part of them will always sail with the ship."**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, I am honored to introduce Mrs. Jean Hastert.**